

In the name of Allah,
the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

PRAYER OF THE PIOUS

صلاة الخاشعين

Dr. Ruqaia Al-Alwani

Special thanks to Najmah Parera, Ghada Khafagy and all the sisters who participated in translating this book.

May Allah accept this from us all.

Ruqaia Al-Alwani

Glossary

(﷿): سبحانه وتعالى Far removed is Allah from any imperfection and Most Exalted is He. Another translation: Glorified and Highly Exalted is He.
(ﷺ): May Allah bless him and grant him peace.
(﵁): رضي الله عنه May Allah be pleased with him.
Adhān: الأذان the call to prayer
Allah: الله All Arabs, Muslims as well as non-Muslims, refer to God using the word *Allah* which means the One and Only True God. This term is not subject to gender or to plurality – a befitting and consistent emphasis on the transcendence and Divine Majesty of the Creator. The word *Allah* appears in the

Qur'an and some other scriptures such as the Hebrew Old Testament where the word *Allah* appears 89 times.

Du'ā': دعاء supplication

Ḥadīth: حديث A *ḥadīth* (plural: *aḥādīth*) is a saying or an act ascribed to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

Ḥaram: حرام divinely forbidden

Iḥsan: الإحسان means proficiency. Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said that *iḥsan* is "to worship Allah as if you were seeing Him. For even if you do not see Him, [be aware that] He sees you."

Ikhlās: الإخلاص sincerity

Iqamah: الإقامة refers to the second call to prayer,

given immediately before the prayer begins.

Khushū': الخشوع is a state of complete submission, humility and quietude when one stands before Allah in prayer and fully directs one's heart and mind toward Him.

Mu'adhdhin: مؤذن caller to prayer

Rabb: رب the Lord (of the Universe), the Sustainer, the Cherisher

Riyā': الرياء is hypocrisy and dissemblance, i.e., to perform acts which are pleasing to Allah with the intention of pleasing other than Allah.

Rukū': ركوع bowing

Ṣalāh: الصلاة is the Islamic ritual prayer.

Shahādah: الشهادة The testimony of faith or declaration that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.

Sujūd: سجود prostration

Surah/Surat: سورة is a Qur'an chapter. The ending of the word changes for pronunciation purposes.

Takbīr: تكبير affirming and saying *Allahu Akbar* (Allah is Greater)

Taqwa: تقوى This word has all the following meanings: piety, righteousness, fear and love of Allah, being conscious of Him and taking great care to avoid His displeasure.

Tawḥīd: التوحيد is Islam's most fundamental concept

confirming the Oneness and Uniqueness of the Creator and that none has the right to be worshipped except Him, i.e., in terms of our deeds, no one is entitled to what Allah is entitled to. According to the Qur'an, this concept was also the focus of all Allah's prophets and messengers to all nations.

'Ubudiyyah: العبودية means servitude. In the context of a Muslim's relationship with Allah, the word means pure worship and trust of Allah as well as submitting and humbling oneself to Him.

Wuḍū': الوضوء (Ablution) is ritual washing in preparation for prayers.

Yaqīn: اليقين absolute certainty of faith



Introduction

Ṣalāh is the strongest bond that links man to the Creator (ﷻ). Its essence is *khushū'*. This kind of prayer in which one enters a state of complete submission, humility and quietude, fully directing one's heart and mind toward Allah (ﷻ) bears abundant fruit. The fruit of such a prayer is happiness and success in this life and in the Hereafter. In the Qur'an Allah says:

﴿ قَدْ أَفْلَحَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۝١ ٱلَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَٰشِعُونَ ۝٢ ﴾

Successful indeed are the believers who are humble in their prayers. (23:1-2)

One of the challenges we face in this age is the lack of *khushū'* in prayers. 'Ubadah ibn Al-Ṣamit (ﷺ) said: "If you wish, I will tell you about the first knowledge to be removed from the people. It is *khushū'*. Soon you will enter a *masjid* where people pray *jamā'ah* (congregational prayers) to find that none among them is in a state of *khushū'*." (Reported by Tirmidhi)

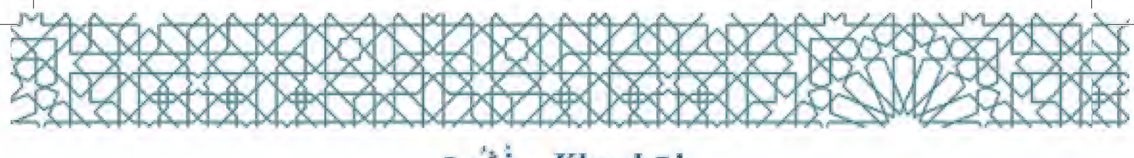
Khushū' starts in the heart. To attain *khushū'* the heart needs to be liberated from all that distracts and corrupts it. The mind and our senses of sight and hearing are the main avenues of influence to the

heart. These are continually peppered with a complex mixture of spontaneous precipitants, bits of information, numerous sounds, images, words and all that is part of man's cultural, social, and natural environment. Our success to attain *khushū'* depends on our effort to be selective about what we allow into these channels that are directly connected to the heart. To be able to detect and sort out the things that are reaching our senses and mind we need constant training.

This booklet serves as a practical guide to solve the problem of lacking *khushū'* in *ṣalāh*. The approach

used in this book is in accordance with the latest findings in the field of human development. This approach deals with negative thinking with the aim of eradicating it and promoting positive thinking by using elaborate practical steps.

May Allah accept this work and grant us success.



خُشُوع - *Khushū'*

The first Arabic letter of the word *khushū'* is خ. This is also the first letter of the word خُضُوع – **submission** of the heart and limbs to Allah.

The second letter is ش. This is the first letter of the word شُهُود – **witnessing**, sensing and acknowledging Allah's manifest and latent blessings.

The third letter is و. This is the first letter of the word وَجَل – the heart's **awe and fear** of Allah.

The last letter is ع. This is the first letter of عَزْم – **determination** to renounce sins and personal desires.

- While praying, do you sometimes find yourself unable to make out what you said, unable to remember which Qur'an verses you have been reciting?
- Do you wish to attain *khushū'* in your *ṣalāh*?
- Do you get sidetracked by thoughts and worldly distractions while praying?
- Do you want to teach your children how to attain *khushū'*?

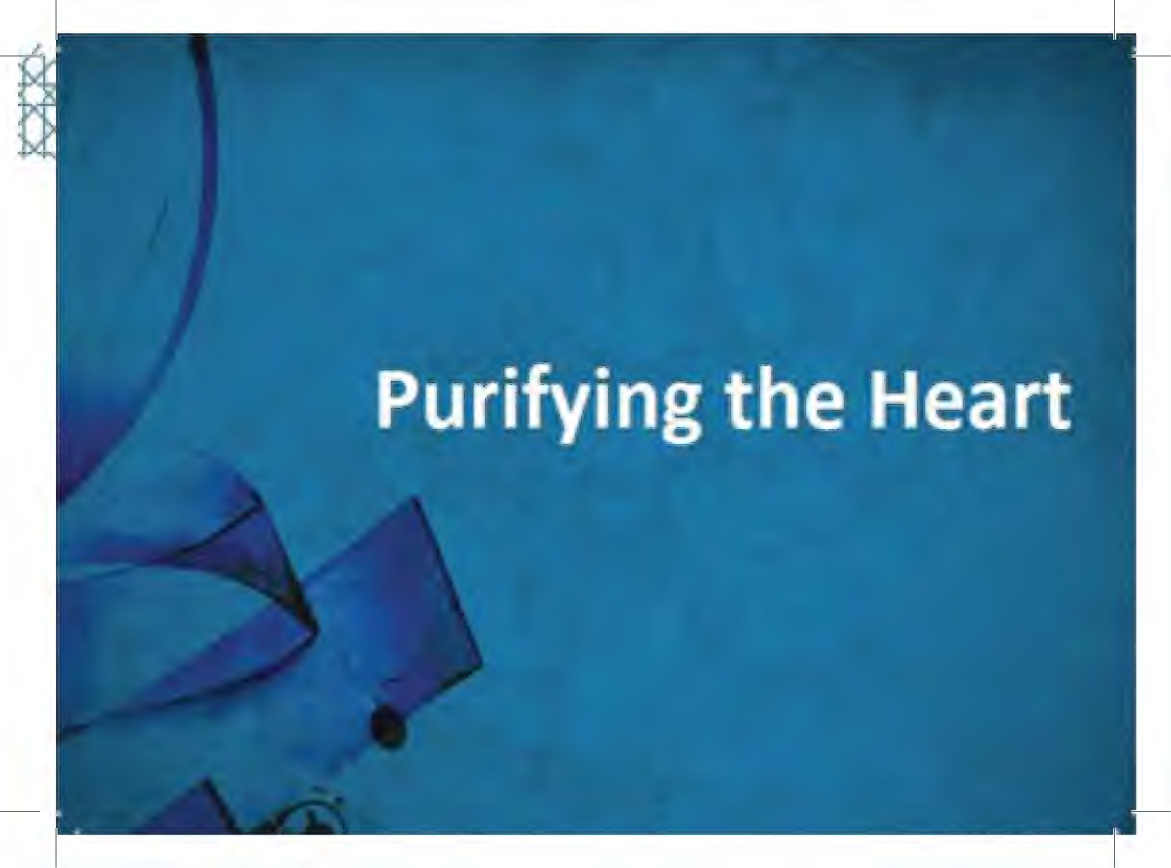
If the answer to any of the above questions is YES, please read on.

How can I achieve *khushū'* in my *ṣalāh*?

Purification of the Heart

Purification of the Body

Performing *Ṣalāh*


Purifying the Heart

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Verily, there is a morsel of flesh in the body, if it is sound, the entire body will be sound, but if it is corrupt, the whole body will be corrupt. It is the heart." (Bukhāri and Muslim)

To purify the heart, one needs to monitor one's





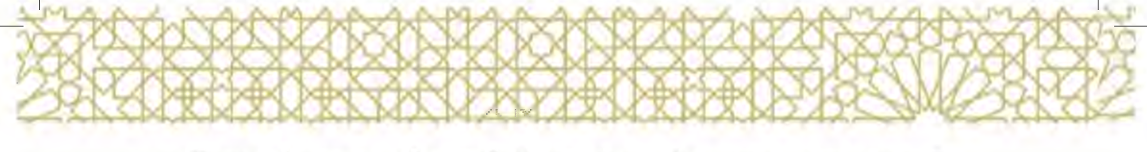
1- Monitoring the Sense of Hearing

a) Contemplate the *adhān* (call to prayer).
b) Turn a deaf ear to whatever will harm you.

a) Contemplating the *Adhān*

- Once you hear the *adhān*, keep silent and still. Listen to the call to prayer with your heart.
- As you listen, reflect on the phrase *Allahu Akbar* – Allah is Greater. Ponder the Greatness and Grandeur of Allah and the insignificance of everything other than Him (ﷻ).
- In your heart, in your life, glorify Allah and nothing else.
- Reflect on the meaning of *Tawḥīd* as you listen to Allah's name rising high in the whole universe.





- Sense how needy and dependent the entire creation is upon the Most High (ﷻ), and how free of need and self-sufficient He is.
- Think deeply about the meaning of the *Shahādah* as the caller says: "I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah." Remind yourself that you bear witness before Allah (ﷻ) that no one has power or control over your life except Him.
- As the caller says: "I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah," remind yourself that you are following in his footsteps, for he (ﷺ) is the messenger of your Lord to you.

أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله
أشهد أن محمدا رسول الله

I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah.
I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

Reflect

When you repeat the *Shahādah* after the *mu'adhdhin* (caller to prayer), do you reflect on its meaning and significance? Do you acknowledge that when you utter the words of the *Shahādah*, you are actually committing yourself to following a way of life prescribed by Allah?

When you hear the *mu'adhdhin* say: "حي على الصلاة *Come to Prayer*," be conscious that the Creator (ﷻ) is inviting you to draw near, to talk and open your heart to Him.

- Remember how powerless you are. Put your faith and trust in the Most Powerful and say:

لا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِالله

There is no might or power except with Allah.

- Always say after *adhān*:

اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ هذِهِ الدَّعوةِ التَّامَّةِ ، والصَّلاةِ الْقَائِمةِ، آتِ مُحَمَّداً الْوسِيلَةَ والْفَضِيلَةَ، وابْعثْهُ مقَامًا محْمُوداً الَّذي وعَدْتَه.

O Allah! Lord of this perfect call and established prayer, grant Muhammad intercession and favor, and raise him up to the praiseworthy station that You have promised him.

b) Turning a Deaf Ear to Whatever will Harm You

The following will have negative effects on your prayers:

- listening to people backbiting others
- listening to idle talk frequently
- listening to anything which is *ḥaram* (divinely forbidden)

2- Monitoring the Visual Sense of Sight

- Do not look at what Allah has bequeathed to others of possession, talent or beauty, and envy them for it.
- Thank Allah for the blessings that He has bestowed on others even if those blessings do not benefit you in a direct way.
- Visualize and ponder the various blessings that Allah has bestowed upon you – those that are manifest as well as those that are latent.

Always say: ***Alḥamdulillah***
All grateful praise belongs to Allah.

Ponder Allah's following words:

﴿ يَعۡلَمُ خَآئِنَةَ ٱلۡأَعۡيُنِ وَمَا تُخۡفِي ٱلصُّدُورُ ﴾ (سورة غافر)

[Allah] is aware of the stealthy glance, and of all that the hearts conceal. (Qur'an 40:19)

- Be aware that Allah is always watching you.
- Do not gaze at the divinely forbidden, the *ḥaram*.
- Avoid staring at whatever will not benefit you.
- Do not look at what others have.
- Observe and reflect upon the perfection and excellence in Allah's creation even for a few moments every day.

Do not consider Allah to be the least important among those who watch you.

Know that Allah sees you when you are looking at things secretly and in public.

3- Monitoring the Tongue

- When you recite Qur'an verses or supplications, do not just say them with the tongue. Ponder their meanings and feel them in your heart.
- Learn to control your thoughts, dismissing negative ones, and do not engage your tongue in them.
- Keep distracting thoughts at bay.
- Resolve to keep away from evil in speech.

Hearts are like pots in the chests. They boil with whatever is within them and their ladles are the tongues.

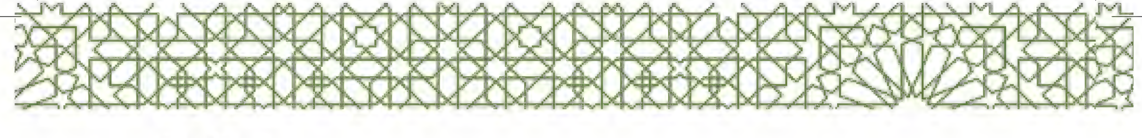
Yahya ibn Mu'adh

Brush your tongue with *istighfār* (asking Allah for forgiveness) and perfume it with *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah).



- Minimize speech that is not beneficial.
- Decontaminate your tongue from verbal abuse, mocking and ridiculing others.
- Avoid backbiting, gossip and spreading rumors. Remember, not everything you hear from others is necessarily true.
- Stay away from indecent people and gossipmongers. You might be infected.
- Do not be unduly inquisitive. Restrain yourself from interfering in other people's concerns.


Purifying the Body

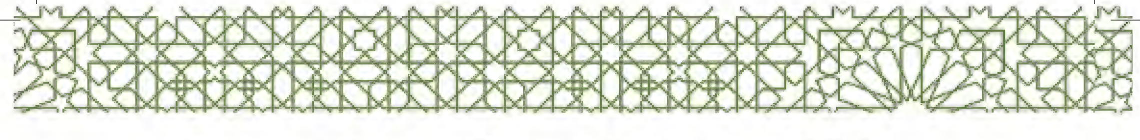


Reflect

When you are performing *wuḍūʾ* (ablution), do you consider purifying your heart and removing the dirt caused by sins?

As you perform *wuḍū'*, ponder the following words of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ):

"When the Muslim – or believing – servant [of Allah] does *wuḍū* and washes his face, every wrong thing at which his eyes have looked leaves with the water – or with the last drop of water, or an expression similar to that. When he washes his hands, every wrong action which his hands have done leaves with the water – or with the last drop of water – until he emerges cleansed of sins." (Reported by Tirmidhi)

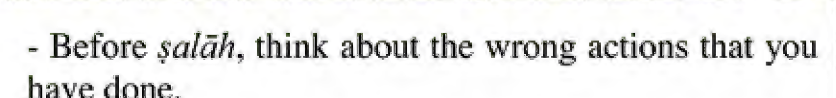


- Rinse your heart with *yaqīn* (certainty of faith).
- Cleanse it from all that corrupts it such as envy, vanity, *riyā'* (hypocrisy) and arrogance.

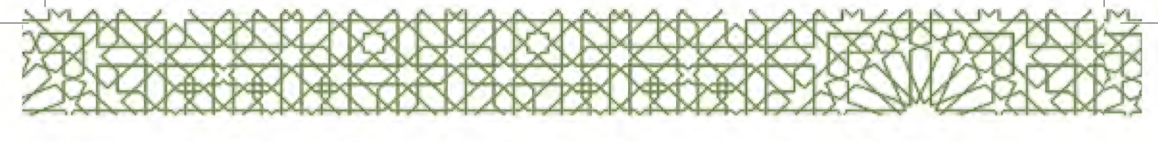
Remember

A complete *wuḍū* is the key to *ṣalāh*.





- Before *ṣalāh*, think about the wrong actions that you have done.
- Reflect on the significance of getting prepared to meet your Creator (ﷻ) with a clean body and a cleansed heart.
- Perform *wuḍū* thoroughly. Be focused as you wash one organ after another.
- As you wash, be certain that Allah (ﷻ) will erase all your sins if you ask for forgiveness.
- Perceive sins leaving your face and limbs.
- Imagine yourself as a fresh page.
- Resolve not to revert to your wrongdoings.



- Feel the effect of the physical and the spiritual purification.
- Save water while performing *wuḍū*.

Reflect

How do you feel when you are performing *wuḍū*?

Remember

After *wuḍū*, say:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ
وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

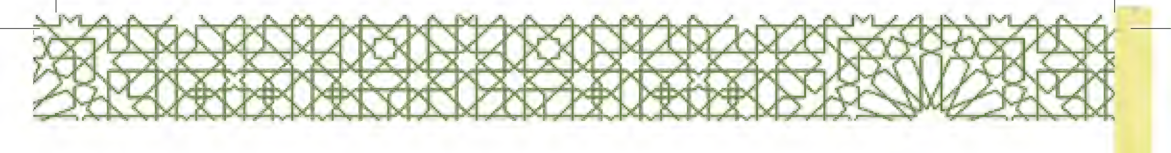
I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah Alone, with no partner or associate, and I testify that Muhammad is His slave and messenger.

Say that with *yaqīn* and visualize your reward: the eight doors of *Jannah* (Paradise) would be opened before you.

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said, “No one among you does *wuḍū* thoroughly – or adequately – and then says, ‘I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah Alone, with no partner, and I testify that Muhammad is His slave and messenger’ without the eight doors of the *Jannah* (Paradise) being opened to him so that he can enter by whichever of them he wishes.” (Reported by Muslim)

- Try to maintain your *wuḍū*, constantly renewing it as much as you can, for it is a sign of faith.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Direct yourselves to what is right, try your best to reach the optimum [although you will not be able to do so completely], and know that the best of your deeds is *ṣalāh* and only a [true] believer maintains his *wuḍū*." (*Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*)

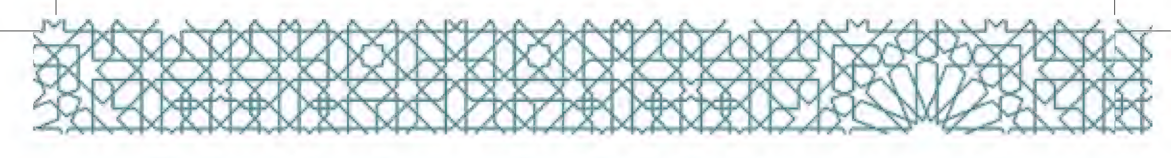


Remember

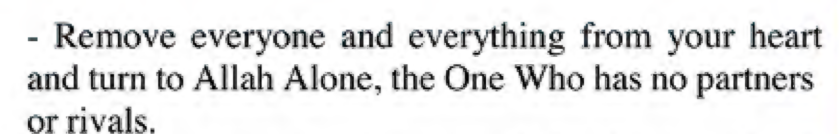
Devote the time between the *adhān* and the *iqamah* to *du'ā'* (supplication).

Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said, "*Du'ā'* (supplication) made between the *adhān* and the *iqama* is never rejected, so supplicate." (authenticated by Al-Albani)

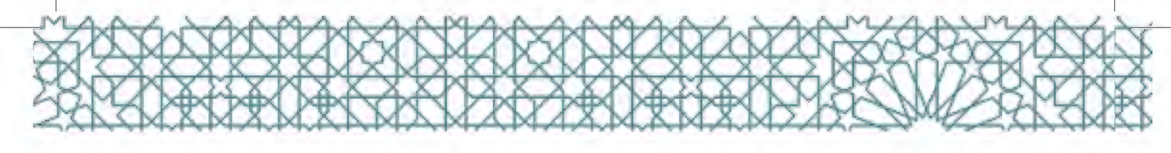

Performing Ṣalāh



Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) said: "What do you think would happen if there was a river by someone's door in which he washed five times every day? Do you think that any dirt would remain on him?" They said, "Not a scrap of dirt would remain on him." He said, "That is a metaphor of the five [daily] prayers by which Allah wipes out wrong actions." (Bukhāri and Muslim)



- Remove everyone and everything from your heart and turn to Allah Alone, the One Who has no partners or rivals.
- Put your worries and sorrows behind you and call upon the Cherisher and Sustainer of all that exists by saying: *Ya Rabb (O Lord)*!
- Be certain that the best way to face calamities and afflictions is to perform *ṣalāh*. Whenever anything distressed the Prophet (ﷺ), he rushed to prayer.
- Keep in mind that *ṣalāh* is the most important thing in your life and your hereafter, and remember that death comes with no warning.

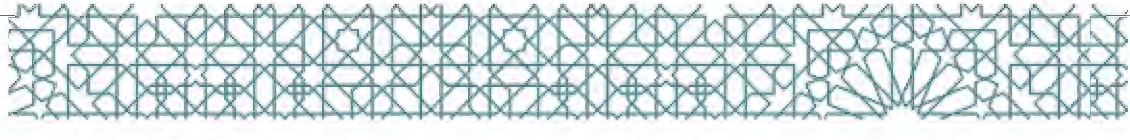


- Remind yourself that *ṣalāh* is the best deed you will bring with you when you meet Allah (ﷻ).
- Pray on time and never delay *ṣalāh* no matter how busy you are.
- Approach *ṣalāh* with love and know that Allah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance.
- Make the time when you pray a time of comfort, joy and calm.
- Talk to people around you about the benefits of the *ṣalāh* in which one achieves *khushū'*.

Ponder Allah’s following words:

﴿ وَٱسْتَعِينُوا۟ بِٱلصَّبْرِ وَٱلصَّلَوٰةِ ۚ وَإِنَّهَا لَكَبِيرَةٌ إِلَّا عَلَى ٱلْخَـٰشِعِينَ ﴾

And seek help through patience and prayer, and indeed, it is difficult except for the humbly submissive [to Allah]. (Qur’an 2:45)



Reflect

When you pray, do you bring your worries, concerns and sorrows along?

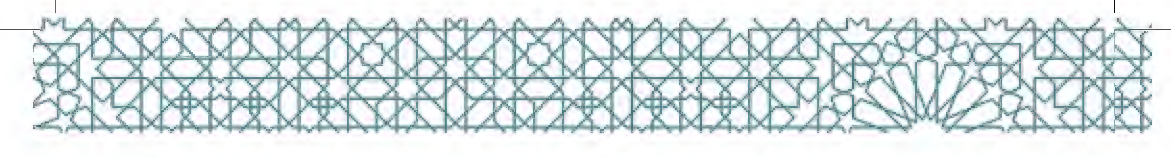
- Re-evaluate your priorities and make *ṣalāh* your top priority.
- Learn to control your thoughts. Do not let distracting thoughts take over.
- Live in the moment.

Takbīr

- As you say *Allahu Akbar*, make sure that He (ﷻ) remains inside your heart and mind greater than anyone. The moment you realize that your thoughts have wandered off, that you are thinking of someone other than Allah, call to mind the meaning of *Allahu Akbar*.

- In your heart, magnify Allah (ﷻ) with all magnificence that is due to Him and remember that no one other than Him has the power to harm or benefit you.

- Do not submit to another mortal being or object, always keeping in mind the meaning of *Allahu Akbar*.



- Do not underestimate sincere *takbīr*, the power of which fills the space between the heavens and the earth.
- Know that when you say *Allahu Akbar* at the beginning of the *ṣalāh* (i.e., *takbīrat-ul-iḥram*), all worldly activities and matters that are otherwise permissible become forbidden.
- **Feel** the absolute Power of Allah, His Grandness and Majesty.

Allah is Greater in my heart.

Saying the *Isti'ādhah:*

أعوذ بالله من الشيطان الرجيم

I seek refuge in Allah from Satan the outcast.

- Remember that Shaytan (Satan) will use all his power to distract your heart from *ṣalāh*, an act of worship that he is deprived of.
- Keep in mind that *isti'ādhah* is not just words that you utter. The heart has to strive to get rid of Shaytan's whispers and insinuating thoughts.

Reciting Surah Al-Fatiḥah

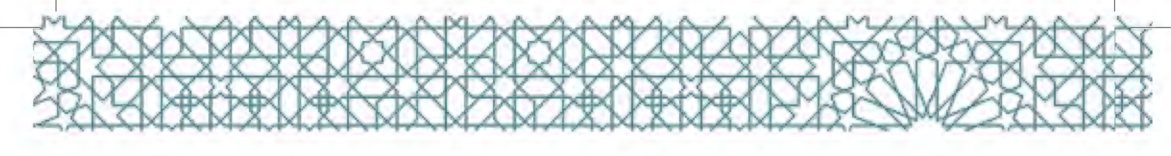
- While praying, show respect and complete submission to Allah (ﷻ). Avoid looking around, fidgeting or being restless. Be aware that you are standing before the Self-Sufficient Master (ﷻ) Who is not in need of your prayers while you are in desperate need of Him.

- Disconnect your mind from everyone and turn all your wants, aspirations and hopes over to Allah as you say:

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ ***Bismillah***

In the Name of Allah.

Ibn Taymiyyah says: “Your '*ubudiyyah* (pure worship and trust of Allah as well as submitting and humbling oneself to Him) will never be perfect as long as you crave things from others besides Allah. Cleanse your heart until no one remains there except Him.”



Why do I have so many distractions in my life?

- Does this make you feel happier?
- Does it give you peace and tranquility?
- Will this help you get rid of your worries and sorrows?

Remember

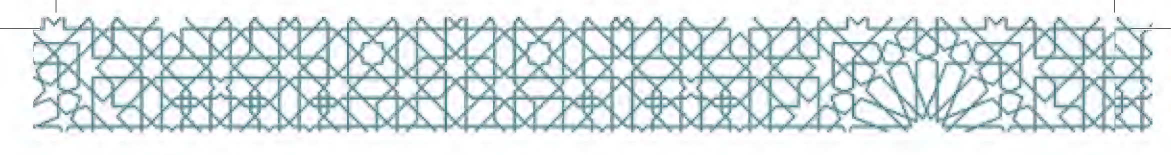
Having an unfocused mind and an absent heart while praying indicates a lack of respect when communicating with Allah (ﷻ).

- Be vigilant, monitoring yourself, and continually seek help from Allah.
- Call death to mind and consider this: You may be praying your last prayer.
- Remind yourself that you will only get reward for the moments when your heart was present during the prayer.

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "A person may perform the [entire] prayer, but gets no credit except for a tenth of it, a ninth, an eighth, a seventh, a sixth, a fifth, a quarter, a third or a half of it. (*Musnad Ahmad*)

Do you comprehend the significance of your position as you stand before Allah (ﷻ)?

- Visualize yourself standing in front of the True King (ﷻ).
- Remind yourself that Allah (ﷻ) is looking at you, observing you.
- Keep in mind the Lordliness and Majesty of Allah.
- As you talk to Allah in your *ṣalāh*, ponder upon His Names and Divine Attributes – Exalted is He – so that you appraise His Glory with true appraisal.
- Perform *jihād al-nafs* (striving against the inclinations of oneself), struggling to brush away any random thoughts.



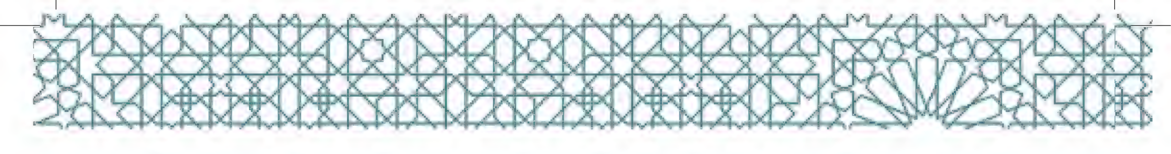
- Remember that Allah loves the doers of *iḥsan* (proficiency). To perform a flawless *ṣalāh* is the best *iḥsan* you can offer.
- As you stand in your *ṣalāh*, call to mind the scene of the Day of Judgment and picture yourself standing before your Lord. You still have the chance to ask for forgiveness and repent so do not miss that chance.
- Perform every *ṣalāh* as you would perform your last *ṣalāh* for it may really be the last one.

- Wholeheartedly recite: الْحَمْدُ لِلَّـهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
[All grateful] praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds.

According to the *ḥadith*, Allah (ﷻ) will respond to these words. Spend some moments to listen in your heart to Allah's response: "My servant has praised me," when you say الْحَمْدُ لِلَّـهِ ***Alḥamdulillah***

All grateful praise belongs to Allah.

- Thank Allah for everything especially your *ṣalāh* for it is only by His Grace that you stand before Him.
- Spend some moments summoning up the different blessings that you enjoy.

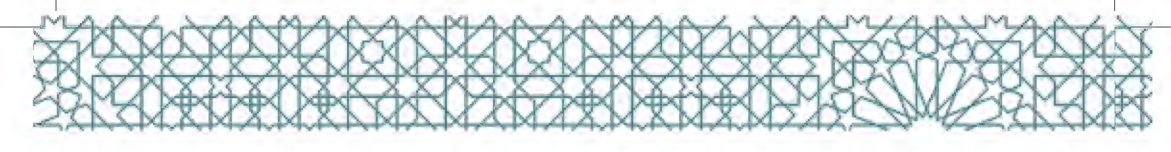


Remember

- Allah (ﷻ) is praised for His Actions, Names and Attributes.
- The best way to thank Allah is through good deeds that go hand in hand with a belief that the All-Provider is Praiseworthy.

Do you reflect upon the favors that Allah has bestowed on you and appreciate their value?

- Take pleasure in perceiving the blessings you enjoy, those that are manifest and those that are latent.
- Be certain that Allah (ﷻ) is the Most Merciful and know that your aptitude to praise and thank Him is one of the best gifts He (ﷻ) has granted you.
- Keep your breath engaged and your tongue moist with words of praising and thanking Allah. Know that no matter how much you praise Allah (ﷻ), you will never be able to praise Him enough.



- Know that when you feel incapable of praising and thanking Allah enough, this feeling is, in itself, a fine way of praising Allah and humbling yourself to Him.
- Do not envy others for what they have. Even if you cannot enjoy direct benefits from those blessings and gifts that others have received from Allah, still thank and praise Him by saying ***Alḥamdulillah***.



Reflect

Do you consider standing before Allah in *ṣalāh*, talking and opening your heart to him a blessing?

- Remember there are many who wish to be in your place, praying and talking to the Owner of Sovereignty, but are unable to come back to this life.
- Focus on the prayer, part with everything and everyone and think only of Allah before Whom you are standing.

- Be conscious of the Mercy of Allah, Exalted in Might and Glorified is He, which encompasses all creation as you utter the words: الرَّحْمَـٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

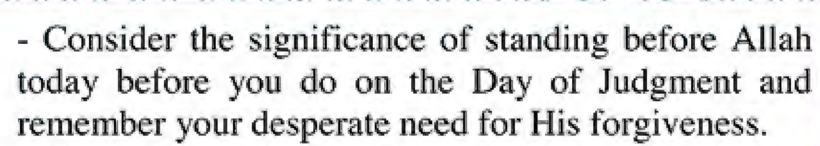
the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

- Learn to be just and fair, and resolve to refrain from committing sins and harming others as you recite:

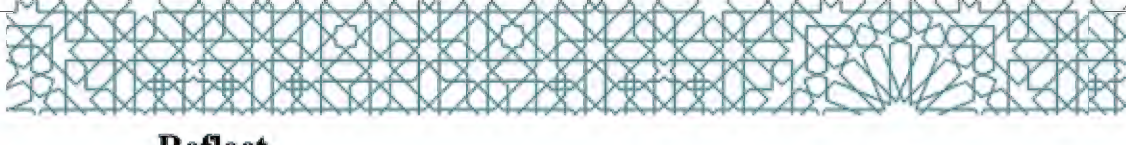
مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ

Master of the Day of Judgment

- Be conscious of the Power, Majesty, and the ultimate Justice of Allah. Be certain that no one will flee from the Final Judgment.



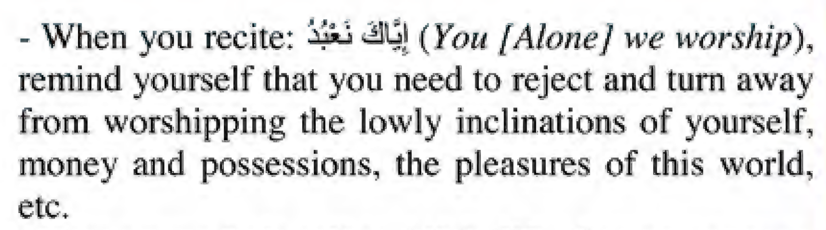
- Consider the significance of standing before Allah today before you do on the Day of Judgment and remember your desperate need for His forgiveness.
- Keep in mind that you are a traveler passing through this world and that the Hereafter is your final destination.
- Determine to fulfill the rights of Allah and the rights of those with whom you interact promptly.



Reflect

Do you feel directly responsible for your actions and think about Allah holding you accountable for them?

- Learn to take responsibility for your actions and do not lay the blame on others. Remember that *no bearer of burdens shall bear the burden of another* (39:7).
- Change yourself. Do not wait for things to happen, make them happen.
- Always be ready for the Day of Recompense and as you pray, remind yourself that Allah will ask you about your *ṣalāh*, your presence of heart and its impact on your life.



- When you recite: إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ (*You [Alone] we worship*), remind yourself that you need to reject and turn away from worshipping the lowly inclinations of yourself, money and possessions, the pleasures of this world, etc.

- Turn your whole self to Allah, Who has no partners, as you recite:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ

You [Alone] we worship
and You [Alone] we ask for help.

- Remind yourself how desperately you need Allah as you recite: وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ (*and You [Alone] we ask for help*). Sense the significance of having no true helper or supporter who will aid you in your life and in your worship except the True Helper and Supporter (ﷻ).



Reflect

To whom does your heart turn at times of need and distress?

- Illuminate your heart by seeking aid and support from Allah (ﷻ).
- Purge yourself of selfishness and greed, for all wealth and provision is entirely in the Provider's hand.

- Make *du'ā'* (supplication) for others in their absence for this is the key to rid yourself of selfishness. When learning that something good has happened to someone, ask Allah to make it blessed for him or her; and when learning that a calamity or an evil has stricken someone, ask Allah to relieve him or her of it.

- Remember that your ultimate goal is to be guided to the straight path as you recite:

اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ

Guide us to the Straight Path.

- Pray earnestly with all your heart that you will reach this splendid target – guidance to the straight path.

- Imagine a road taken by *the prophets, the steadfast affirmers of truth, the martyrs and the righteous* (Qur'an 4:69). Then ask Allah (ﷻ) sincerely to make you join them in Paradise as you recite:

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor

- Know that the greatest loss is to earn Allah's wrath and to stray from the Straight Path. Remember that as you say:

غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ

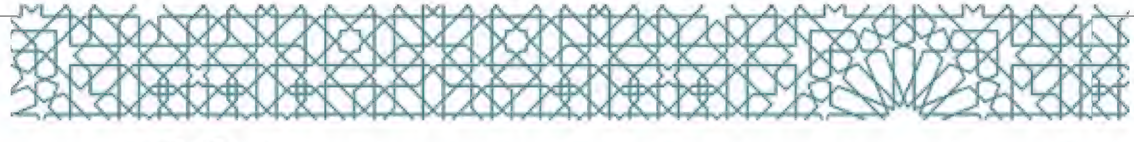
Not the [path] of those who earn Your anger nor of those who go astray.

***Rukū'* (Bowing)**

-Remember that bowing is not just a physical movement. If your heart is absent, awaken it as you say: سبحان ربي العظيم (*Far removed is my Lord, the Most Magnificent, from any imperfection*).

- Stimulate your heart by recalling the Creator's Greatness, Majesty and Glory. Submit to His Power and humble yourself to Him (ﷻ).

- Do not bow in submission except to Allah. Bow in submission to Him in everything that you do – inside your heart and through your deeds, inwardly and outwardly.



Reflect

Have you made up your mind not to bow in submission except to Allah in every aspect of your life?

- Break every chain that is preventing you from obeying Allah.
- Envision the substantial gains you will obtain when you comply with the commands of your Creator such as sheltering you from harm and easing your way through this life and the Hereafter.

- While raising your head from *rukū'*, be certain that the All-Hearing (ﷻ) is listening and looking at you as you say: سَمِعَ اللهُ لِمَنْ حَمِدَهُ

Allah hears [and responds to] whoever praises Him.



- Say the following supplications starting with your heart before uttering the words with your tongue.

رَبَّنَا وَلَكَ الْحَمْدُ، حَمْدًا كَثِيرًا طَيِّبًا مُبَارَكًا فِيهِ

Our Lord, [all grateful] praise is Yours, abundant, good and blessed praise.

اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا لَكَ الْحَمْدُ مِلْءَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَمِلْءَ الأَرْضِ وَمِلْءَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا وَمِلْءَ مَا شِئْتَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ بَعْدُ

O Allah, our Lord, [all grateful] praise is Yours; [a praise that] fills the heavens and the earth and what lies between them, and whatever else You please.

Reflect

Do you still maintain your peace and heartfelt gratitude when bad things happen to you?

- Learn to be thankful to Allah and keep on saying *Alḥamdulillah* (All grateful praise belongs to Allah).
- Put your trust in Allah (ﷻ) and accept whatever He has ordained for you. Know that things are not to be judged by how they start; it is the end that matters.
- Renew your intentions and revive your *taqwa* (piety).

- Say the following supplication frequently:

اللَّهُمَّ آتِ نَفْسِي تَقْوَاهَا وَزَكِّهَا أَنْتَ خَيْرُ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا أَنْتَ وَلِيُّهَا وَمَوْلاَهَا

O Allah, grant my soul taqwa (piety) and purify it, for You are the best One to purify it. You are its Guardian and its Master.

Sujūd (Prostration)

- The Prophet (ﷺ) said that a servant (of Allah) becomes closest to his Lord while he is prostrating. As you prostrate, remember that you have reached that elevated status.

- Remind yourself that from the earth you came and to the earth you will one day return.

-Think of the Grandeur and Majesty of the Originator (ﷻ) as you place your forehead on the ground, as you sincerely humble the highest part of your body to His Sovereignty.

- With all humility and humbleness say:

سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الأَعْلَى

Glory is to my Lord, the Most High.

سَجَدَ وَجْهِيَ لِلَّذِي خَلَقَهُ، وَصَوَّرَهُ، وَشَقَّ سَمْعَهُ وَبَصَرَهُ

My face is prostrated to the One Who created it, fashioned it, and gave it hearing and sight.

- Since *sujūd* is highest level of '*ubudiyyah*, prolong it as much as you can.

Do you feel humble while prostrating?

- Revive your heart by recalling the Hereafter and mentally picturing people standing before their Creator for the Final Judgment.
- If you wish to taste the sweetness of submission to the Supreme (ﷻ), then learn humility. Embrace a humble and modest attitude towards others.
- While prostrating, ask the Most Generous (ﷻ) to grant you *khushū'*.
- Make a lot of *du'ā'*, asking Allah to grant you and others every good in this world and in the Hereafter.

- Lift your head up from *sujūd* and ask the Most Merciful to forgive you for your shortcomings and for lagging behind when it comes to fulfilling your duties toward Him (ﷻ). Say:

رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي ،رَبِّ اغْفِرْ لِي

My Lord, forgive me.
My Lord, forgive me.



- Then say the following words with all sincerity:

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي، وَارْحَمْنِي، وَاهْدِنِي، وَاجْبُرْنِي، وَعَافِنِي، وَارْزُقْنِي، وَارْفَعْنِي.

O Allah forgive me, have mercy on me,
guide me, support me, protect me,
provide for me and elevate me.

- Sense your utmost need for these supplications and remember that the Most Compassionate (ﷻ) is the only one who can grant you what you ask for.

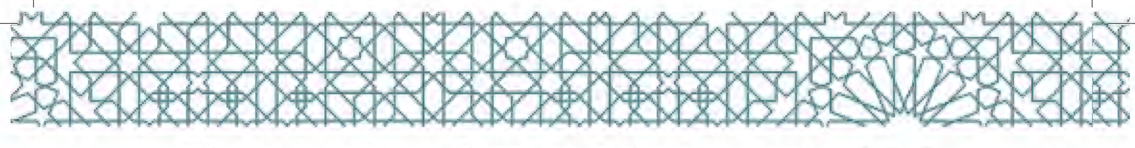
- Ponder the eternal Dominion of Allah (ﷻ) as you recite التحيات لله *At-taḥiyyāt lillah* (**all words that indicate the glorification of Allah**).

- Call to mind the meanings of *tawḥīd* and *ikhlās* (sincerity), acknowledging that, in terms of our deeds, no one is entitled to what Allah is entitled to.

- Do not become accustomed to uttering the words in your *ṣalāh* without reflecting on their meanings and perceiving their great impact.

After performing *ṣalāh*, do you perceive a positive change in your behavior?

- Imagine that a wall in your house was destroyed! Compare the flaws in your *ṣalāh* to damage affecting your own home.
- *Ṣalāh* is the main pillar of our religion. Preserve and maintain it!
- Make sure to erase from your heart the love of whatever spoils your *ṣalāh*.
- Be aware of any positive change that *ṣalāh* brings to you.



- If you detect any flaws or defects in your *ṣalāh*, be concerned and resolve to fix them immediately.
- Mull over the reasons preventing you from attaining *khushū'*.
- Analyze these reasons objectively without blowing things out of proportion.

Does *ṣalāh* give you tranquility and comfort?

- Reflect on how you feel before and after *ṣalāh*.
- Observe your general mood after praying and take note of any changes.
- Monitor your behavior after praying.
- Remind yourself of the necessity to strive against the lowly inclinations of yourself (*jihād al-nafs*) and know that it will be difficult especially at the beginning.
- Design a timetable for recording your performance and presence of heart during your *ṣalāh*.

After *Ṣalāh*

- Teach others what you have learned, especially children.
- In teaching children, do not just focus on the body movements, positions and words. Teach them the purpose of *ṣalāh* and its spiritual meanings and value.

Are you interested in teaching the purpose and merits of *ṣalāh* to others, especially to children?

- When teaching children how to pray, make sure to instill *iḥsan* in them. In other words, teach children from an early age to "worship Allah as if you were seeing Him. For even if you do not see Him, [be aware that] He sees you" (reported by Bukhāri).
- Teach children to show respect to Allah (ﷻ) when praying. Show them, by giving simple examples, how looking around and fidgeting when talking to the Creator (ﷻ) are signs of bad manners and lack of respect.

- Be wise when dealing with children. Watch closely the child's emotions especially when praying and encourage him or her.
- Avoid materialistic rewarding as a means to encourage children to pray.
- Help children adopt – and enjoy – the habit of going to the *masjid* (mosque) and praying in *jama'ah* (congregation) by encouraging and explaining the purpose and benefits to them.
- When talking to children about abstract concepts, such as tranquility and serenity, use simple metaphors and fiction.
- Use clear simple language and do not bore the child.

- Help the child to visualize the reward of *ṣalāh*, creating a vivid positive mental picture of the reward as Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) used to do with his Companions. Sit with the child after performing *ṣalāh* and say things like: “Imagine yourself on a very hot day, trying to find some shade to protect you from the heat of the sun and all of a sudden you find it,” or “Imagine seeing light in a very dark place,” etc.

- Once you hear the *adhān*, create a joyful atmosphere in your home. At the same time, behave in a way that demonstrates how important *ṣalāh* is.

- Never postpone *ṣalāh* and always display an attitude of concern when it comes to performing it on time.

- Seek the love of Allah by being keen on perfecting your obligatory prayers and by praying the *nafl* (voluntary) prayers. Focus on the quality not the quantity of the voluntary prayers. Explain these concepts in a simple way to children.

- Mention the Hereafter to the child using simple language. Do not just focus on the physical or materialistic aspects of the Day of Judgment; your words should produce positive inspirational thoughts.

- Encourage children to pass on their own experience regarding *ṣalāh* to other children, thus making children train each other.



Dr. Ruqaia Al-Alwani has a Ph.D. in Islamic Studies (Humanities Minor) and is currently an Associate Professor at the University of Bahrain. Her special interest is in the field of Comparative Religion which she has taught in both Arabic and English. In addition, she has delivered training courses in a number of areas including Human Development, Social Networking, Academic & Educational Performance Improvement, Positive Values and Contemplation of the Quran. Dr. Ruqaia has also written and published several books which deal with a variety of topics including reflections on the verses of the Qur'an, management studies for women, family and youth development projects, and areas of e-learning.

رقم الناشر الدولي ISBN
4-5-731-99901-978

رقم الإيداع بإدارة المكتبات العامة
10836/2012 د ع